

Effects of Advertising on Youth (Age Group of 13-19 Years Age)

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Abstract

One of the controversial topic advertisers must deal with is the issue of advertising to children. Studies have also shown that television is an important source of information for children about products. Critics argue that children are especially vulnerable to advertising because they lack the experience and knowledge to understand and evaluate critically the purpose of the persuasive advertising appeals. They also feel that the pre-school children cannot differentiate between commercials and programmes and cannot distinguish between reality and fantasy. Critics charge threat advertising to children is inherently unfair and deceptive and should be banned.

On the other hand are those that advertising is a part of life and children must learn to deal with it in consumer socialization process of acquiring the skills needed to function in the market place. Some feel that parents should be involved in helping children interpret advertising and can refuse to purchase products they believe are undesirable for their children. The issues of advertising directed to children have been receiving great attention recently. There is also a growing concern over how advertisers are using internet to communicate with and sell to children.

Advertising to children will remain a controversial topic. Some groups feel that government is responsible for protecting children from potential harmful effects of advertising while others argue that parents are ultimately responsible for doing so. It is important to many companies to communicate directly with children. However only being sensitive to the naiveté of children as consumers will they be able to do so freely and avoid the conflict with those who believe children should be protected from advertising. One group feels that banning television ads will deny advertisers the right of speech to communicate with other audience members. They also feel that no authority has the professional competence to serve as the 'national nanny' deciding what children should be exposed to. They say children are aware that fruits and vegetables are more nutritious than the highly sugared foods. There have been attempts to ban sugared food products directed to or seen by children with nutritional and or health disclosures. It is reported that children between the ages of two and eleven spend about 25 hours per week watching television and see approximately 20,000 ads per year and 7,000 of these ads are for sugared products.

Realizing that children are imaginative and that make-believe play constitutes an important part of the growing-up process. Advertisers should exercise care not to exploit the imaginative quality of children. Unreasonable expectation of product quality or performance should not be stimulated either directly or indirectly by advertising.

Recognizing that advertising may play an important part in educating the child, information should be communicated in a truthful and accurate manner with full recognition by the advertiser that the child may learn practices from advertising that can affect his or her health and well-being. The controversy on ads aimed at children has generated an ongoing steam of research on the effects of children's advertising.

Although may influences affect a child's personal and social development, it remains the prime responsibility of the parents to provide guidance for children. Advertisers should contribute to this parent-child relationship in a constructive manner.

Keywords: Advertising; Facebook; Communication; Information

Introduction

The hour today is the hour of mass communication. Advertising in particular has become an indispensable mode of communication with the market. Advertising is a means of communication with the users of a product or service. Advertisements are messages paid for by those who send them and are intended to inform or influence people who receive them, as defined by the Advertising Association of the UK.

The importance of advertising grows steadily as brands rely heavily on media for various marketing objectives such as increasing sales, creating knowledge and awareness in the market etc. the field of advertising continues to grow and evolve. Advertising also plays a very important role in shaping the ever changing norms of society both nationally and globally. With the growing role of advertising in the lives of people attention now is being paid to the various negative as well as positive effects of advertising.

Various criticisms regarding the role of advertising in our society have emerged. Media in particular advertising has never played a more

crucial role in a teenager's socio-economic development and well being. Critics argue that children are especially vulnerable to advertising because they lack the experience and knowledge to understand and evaluate critically the purpose of the persuasive advertising appeals. They also feel that the pre-school children cannot differentiate between commercials and programmes and cannot distinguish between reality and fantasy. Critics charge threat advertising to children is inherently unfair and deceptive and should be banned. However the importance of advertising cannot be deemphasised in the dynamic nature of our

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society. It has emerged as the most powerful tool in influencing socio economic relations existing today.

Thus it is to provide further information and analyses upon this dilemma the researchers decided to conduct a research upon the effects of advertising upon youth. While some factions of the society consider it the role of parents to restrict and channel the effects of advertising in a positive direction others believe it is the duty of the government to control the content in order to protect children morals and naiveté. This research therefore tries to throw some light upon this existing controversial debate regarding the responsibility of advertising. The researchers also aim to offer suggestions through which the negative effects of advertising may be limited by analysing the problem through three different perspectives, that of the children, the parents as well as the psychologists [1].

Literature Review

Effects of television advertising on children: with special reference to Pakistani urban children

The purpose this research paper is to discuss the pros and cons on the effect of television advertising on children and to identify those critical impacts which lead to behavioral and eating disorders in children leading to materialism, unnecessary purchasing and low nutritional food. The researcher believes that advertisement is also leading to change in attitude that is aggressive and violent in nature.

The study states that children around the globe almost spend about three to four hours daily watching television. Initially, children face problems in understanding television programs. But being immediate learners, they can make balanced decisions about right or wrong under proper parent guidance. Thus it is advised that the parents of young children to monitor the TV viewing habits of their children. The advertisers have strategies to advertise their products to children due to its deep impact. As children plays an important role influencing purchase decisions the advertisers not only target them at home through television but also target them through advertisements in class rooms and schools. Children below 7–8 years group don't have the ability to understand the TV commercial's cognitive development method. They do not understand what and why sales manner is used. So, one of the major reasons for television advertising is to change the attitude and behavior of the audience. Adults while watching television advertisements understand them through a process known as cognitive filter. Children in families in distress may be more violent. Whether the television is really harmful to children depends from child to child. It could be harmful to some children in some conditions while under the same conditions; it may be beneficial to other children.

Children, adolescents, and advertising

This study was published under the Pediatrics (relating to medical child care) department of sciences emphasizing on the growing influence on the children and adolescents and advertisers strategy of exposing children with different forms of advertising that is on internet, in magazine and in schools. Research has stated that young children (in age group of 8 year) are cognitively and psychologically defenceless against advertising. They do not understand the selling concept leading to which they are accepting advertising claims at face value of the product.

The main concern of the research is how advertisers have portrayed products leading to the psychological impact on the children or youth. Advertisers are seeking to find new and creative ways of targeting

young consumers via the Internet, in schools, and even in bathroom stalls. In this research it is advised the need to educate children and teenagers about the effects of advertising (media literacy). The need to teach young people to become critical viewers of media in all of its forms, including advertising. Media education seems to be protective in mitigating harmful effects of media, including the effects of cigarette, alcohol, and food advertising [2].

Dear Santa: The effects of television advertising on young children

This study was published by Karen J. Pine and Avril Nash University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield, UK in International Journal of Behavioral Development [3]. The effects of television advertising on young children and what do they actually request to Santa for Christmas. Here young children are below the age of 7 years. Television today is major source of entertainment for children today in the western world. They spend more than two and a half hours watching Television and 63% have their own television set. A young child who is as young as three year can't understand the selling motive of the advertiser it is not until 8 years of age that children begin to understand the selling purpose of an advertisement, prior to that it is just part of their entertainment. Three factors that children lack understand of persuasive intent, consumer literacy, and perception of realism.

Discussing further the above three factors researcher says the children do not really realize that the advertisement can portray only positive information and not the negative. But since the children lack in actually understanding the persuasive intent of the advertisement and with lack of awareness they are more vulnerable and show higher trust in advertisements. Younger children believe that advertisements always tell the truth, everything shown is reality as they have a limited understanding of commercial markets, and are unaware that advertisements are motivated out of a desire for profits. This study looks at the impact toy advertising, during Christmas time, has upon children below the age of 7 years. Since this is the age group is likely to have higher trust, lower recall, and lower understanding of commercial messages of advertisement and are more vulnerable so they end up asking for toys in letter to Santa on Christmas Eve.

The effects of television food advertising on childhood obesity

Children's food choices are influenced by the media, television advertising, focusing directly at infants and toddlers. This explains how TV advertising of fast food and other foods high in calories, fat and low in nutrients are contributing to the increase rates of childhood obesity. This all begins through television marketing. Parents should restrict eating foods with poor nutrition and also limit television viewing time. In other studies, it was also found that children watching television for more than four to five hours a day were more overweight than children watching television for two hours or less. Children's food choices are influenced by the media, every age of children watch television and everyone wants to eat all the fast food shown in the television. Disney, Nickelodeon, and PBS channels advertise all the food or different brands like McDonald's, Wendy's, Chuck E. Cheese these all brands sell fast food. These brands attract all age children. Different techniques they use to sell their product like, in a happy meal, children are encouraged to buy happy meal's to collect toys. Several studies have been done regarding this problem. Pre-test and post-test have been done on 1522 eligible students. The results of the pre-test survey support the argument that cumulative exposure to TV food advertising promotes beliefs and attitudes supportive of those foods most heavily represented in food advertising on children's TV- fast foods, and sweet drinks. The

association observed that between television exposure and children's reported junk food consumption is consistent with the evidence base that suggests that television has an adverse effect on children's dietary behaviour.

In the study we found that there were no advertisements about fruits, vegetables, legume or eggs which contain the most important nutrients. To evaluate the children's eating habits and purchasing behaviours. The study concluded that obesity will continue to increase if television and companies continue to advertise food products that are high fat, sugar, or sodium to the children. In conclusion, children are exposed to high amounts of food advertisements which affect young children's poor food consumption. Restrictions can begin with large companies curbing its advertising of popular unhealthy snacks and promote healthy, nutritious snacks. Parents should restrict eating foods with poor nutrition content and also limit television viewing time [4].

Media effects and body image perceptions on youth

This study was published by youth development initiative Media Effects and Body Image Perceptions on Youth.

The Study focus on three main research point which are as follow:

1. Television advertisements have significant impact on youth including product choices and overall perceptions of gender roles.
2. The tendency for preadolescent and adolescent females to compare their bodies to women represented in the media increases with age.
3. Increased exposure to television, magazines and movies put youth at a higher risk of adopting unhealthy lifestyle habits. The researchers discuss this further explaining that the television advertisements impact both the gender equally. The product choice they make and how they see their gender role changes with television add. Females want to be like attractive spokespersons she watches on Television, and on the other hand young male put more stress on becoming muscular like one of those male models in the Ad. Youth often get carried away in the product choice when they see a celebrity endorsing a particular product. Further the researcher explain that it doesn't only effect youth but also people in there preadolescent and adolescent age.

Female and male adolescent tend to compare themselves with models in television advertisements more frequently at this age and as a result both the gender feel insure and lack of confidence in themselves. This also led to unhealthy lifestyle which is one of the most serious things to be taken care of now a days. Girls with stick to crash diet to get unattainable body of those models in advertisement and boys often resort to the use steroids and over exercising to achieve a perceived muscular body [5].

Why teens are the most elusive and valuable customers in tech?

Teenagers have always been important to brands because they tend to be early adopters and because, traditionally, their brand preferences aren't yet firmly defined. According to the writer, teenagers today do not listen to advertisers or marketers and their elder generation; today's teens are discovering trends and deciding for themselves. Teenagers are updated about latest technology with the help of internet and social media. Moreover they are also passing it on to their parent by persuading them to use iPhone and tablets. This generation has a benefit

of not having to adapt themselves to these technological advancements as they were born in an era where it is persistent unlike before. There is an increase in competition as these teenagers are not loyal to the brand but are loyal to the 'best'. This is keeping the marketer and R&D on their toes to create and sell good [6].

Television advertising and interpersonal influences on teenagers' participation in family consumer decisions

This report contains the conclusive result of the research conducted to test the effectiveness of television advertising, media marketing and interpersonal communication on a teenager's consumer behaviour. The effects of these communication procedures on teenagers of this generation are evaluated on the basis of household decision making under different circumstances. This research, particularly, surveys the effects of television advertising, communication with family and peers on consumption, getting influenced by celebrity, and peer pressure on consuming goods which are in the trend [7].

How marketers target kids

Kids today have more autonomy and decision making power than the previous generations which has made them more vocal about what they want their parents to buy. Marketing to children is all about creating pester power and marketers know what a powerful force it can be. Experts have divider pester power into two categories that is 'persistence' and importance. With the help of researchers and psychologists, advertisers have recognized children's emotions, dreams, and social needs. Researchers say, a child as young as six months can form mental images of corporate logos and mascots, and brand loyalty can be established at as early as two years of age, all this can help marketers to have a lifelong relationship.

Marketers now days are also relaying on buzz marketing among kids buy targeting them through internet via Facebook and spreading word of mouth, this could be done for products such as clothes, electronic gadgets, etc.

Earlier schools were a place where children were kept from advertising, but not anymore, as marketers are targeting schools with low funds to commercialize their products. Marketers are willing to pay huge amount in return for high company visibility. For example Pizza Hut started a campaign called 'Book it!' where children were awarded with pizza after achieving monthly reading goals [8].

Child development "by Laura E Berk- book

Following are the passages and excerpts from a psychology book called "child development "by Laura E Berk. This book provides in-depth study on the different milestones in a child's life and the various stages they go through on the course of development. Several topics and studies from researches from this book were referred to in the process of conducting the research about the effect of advertising on youth. Some topics from the book have been provided in brief below. These topics are:

Context for development: media: "During the past half-century, the role of media in the lives of children and adolescents has undergone a "revolutionary change". Although television remains a dominant form of youth media computers exist in most American homes and virtually all school classrooms." The book in the chapter peers, media and schooling stresses on the increasing habit of young adults today to multitask with media. A study done indicates that due to the increasing use of cell phones as the most favoured mode of communication the average American youth 8-18 year old devotes approximately 7 ½

hours a day (53 hours a week) to entertainment media of all kinds. The topic media is further divided into several subtopics which have been further explained. A summary of these are:

Television:

Negatives: "The average time spent watching television is remarkably similar across developed nations and young people in the developing world are not far behind". This book also contains information about an unusual investigation, on the residents of Canadian town who were studied before the television reception became available in their community and again two years later. The study reported a major change in the two results: in school age children, a decline in reading ability and creative thinking, a rise in gender stereotyped beliefs, and an increase in verbal and physical aggression during play; in adolescents, a sharp drop in community participation.

Positives: The book by Laura Berk also talks about the potential for good in watching the television. It states that if the content viewed is improved and if the adults capitalized on it to enhance the children's interest in their everyday lives viewing the television could prove to be a powerful and cost effective means of strengthening cognitive, emotional and sociological development.

How much television do children view?: "Large surveys reveal that American children first become viewers in early infancy. About 40% of U.S. 3-month olds regularly watch with TV or videos. This figure rises to 90% by age 2- a period in which toddlers have difficulty applying what they see on the screen to their everyday experiences. "in early adolescence it rises further to more than hours a day, as teenagers increasingly acquire MP3 players and cell phones with internet connections that enable easy access to television programs. This data reveals that the amount of exposure to media categorically increases from early infancy to late adolescence due to reasons mentioned above.

Television and social learning: This part in the book analyses the effect of media with different social and behavioural attributes like aggression, gender stereotypes, consumerism and prosocial behaviour. The book carries various studies and researches conducted upon the mentioned topics.

Aggression: "in U.S., 57% of programmes viewed between 6 am and 11 pm contains violent scenes, often portraying repeated physically aggressive acts that go unpunished. Victims of TV are rarely shown as experiencing serious harm, and few programs condemn violence or depict other ways of solving problems.

The book explains that violent programmes do not only create short term difficulties in parent and peer relations but also has strongly negative long term consequences.

Ethnic and gender stereotypes: the adverse effects of the misrepresentation of minorities and depicting a lower status of women compared to men links stereotype gender attitudes in children and adolescents including reduced self-esteem and career aspirations, negative body image, and disordered eating in girls.

Consumerism: research suggests that heavy bombardment of children with advertising contributes to a variety of child and youth problems, including family stress, over weight and obesity, materialism and substance use.

Pro social behaviour: in a study the researches asked more than 500 second to sixth graders to name their educational television show and to describe what they learned from the shows. The children did not

only describe several prosocial programs but also accurately explained the message that they were conveying. However prosocial programs convey kind and thoughtful acts only when they are free on antisocial and destructive behavior. Unfortunately that majorly limits the number of prosocial programs on television today.

Television, academic learning and imagination: Since early days of its existence, educationists have always seen interested in television's potential to strengthen academic skills, especially among low SES children. Programs like Sesame Street were specially created to foster children's learning skills. Time devoted to watching children's educational programs is associated with gains to early literacy and maths skills to early academic progress in elementary school. The narrative structured educationalist television programs eases processing demands, freeing up children's working-memory resources for applying program content to real life scenarios [9].

The impact of television advertisements on youth: a study

In this article the author states that the youth today is more sophisticated than 20 years ago. In this article the author focuses on the effects of television advertising on youth. There are more number of views for the television because it serves the combination of colour, sound and action. It is considered the most persuasive medium of communication. It is one of the recent medium of communication and advertising is flourishing everyday with more and more innovative ideas of promotion. Now the youth being educated, they are well aware of the false allegations done by the advertisers in the television advertising and think before they take the purchasing decision. The influence of advertising depends on the various factors like for how long do they watch, the age, personality, the exposure and their conversations about these television advertisements with their parents. Advertisements benefit both the advertisers as well as the consumers. It gives information about the existing as well as new products in the market to the consumers. It helps the advertisers target the right audience through advertising [10].

Television advertising and interpersonal influences on teenagers' participation in family consumer decisions

This study focuses on the influence of television advertising on teenagers' participation in the family consumer decisions. There has been a change in the lifestyle with the increase in the exposure of the youth to the television advertising and hence development of the individual's values, norms, and behaviours.

The study talks about the different aspects of the advertising influences through like the family and peers. Teenagers from several cities and towns in five counties in urban, suburban, semi-rural, and rural Georgia in junior and senior high schools were asked to complete anonymous self-administered questionnaires.

The results of the research states that the age is negatively associated with television advertising viewing and family communications; it is positively associated with peer communication. There is an increased participation of children in the family buying decisions and it may be because of the increased exposure the teenagers are gaining of knowledge through advertising about the products and services in the market [11].

Impact of TV advertisements on teens

The author in the article says that there is an extensive impact on the undeveloped brains of the kids and the teen because of advertising. The marketers have started targeting teens as a special segment for the advertising. One of the reasons could be, the teens or the young

people are impulsive buyers and do not think much before making the purchase decision. Another reason could be the decision making power in the hand of the children as well and the money to buy the products. Marketers taking this as an opportunity have started paying special attention to target this segment of consumers advertisements normally have a mental and physical impact on the teenagers viewing television. A recent study by states that "Children and adolescents view 400 00 advertisements per year on TV alone." This is happening despite the fact that there is a law that limits advertising on children's programming to 10.5 minutes per hour on weekends and 12 minutes per hour during weekdays. However, much of children's viewing occurs during prime time, which features nearly 16 minutes per hour of advertising.

There are harmful effects of advertising on children. From the advertiser's perspective, they find a great potential growth through marketing for this segment of the society. Advertising to the youth may result in the increase in the sales, however having a negative impact on the mental and the physical health of the children and the teenagers who are exposed o such kind of advertising [12].

Growing up with media: Exposure to violence and sex in media

With the help of the pie charts and the other graphical representations the author in the article has tried to analyse the impact on youth because of the exposure to violence and sex in media and the major focus is on internet. With the accessibility of the children to the different media like video and computer games, Internet websites, television has increased the opportunities for children and youth to be exposed to violence.

It is difficult to stop the children from using the media where there are chances of them getting exposed to violence while accessing the varied media. The author says that internet is responsible for the exposure of deviant content like violence and sex. Although according to the research conducted, data suggest that about 90% of youth are *not* exposed to X-rated or "adult" websites where the main topic is sex. Moreover, 85% of youth are *not* exposed to violent content online. Parents need to be keen on what their children are getting exposed to or deliberately viewing content which is not intended for them (i.e. violence and sex). And this is possible with a simple step would be to increase parents' familiarity with rating systems for all types of media such as TV and Internet and computer games. This would help the parents to make their children view the content or play games that are appropriate for them [13].

How advertising targets our children

The writer of the article is very keen towards what advertisements children are exposed to. He has been grown up seeing the tobacco ads and has also mentioned some of the advertising jingles of his times. The writer says that the humour is missing in the advertisements today and there is more of rational advertising. In one of the studies by Jerry L Grenard, a health researcher at Claremont Graduate University, and his colleagues it is mentioned that 4000 students from 7th to 10th grade are exposed to the alcohol advertisements which had led to the increase in the underage drinking of alcohol. They do not even know in how much amount it is consumed. Television advertising remains very important in the ways that foods are marketed to children. Parents do not realise what type of advertising the children are exposed to. With the increasing pester power and the children being aware of the increasing disposable income of their parents the consumption of fast food like the hamburgers and the pizzas have increased and advertising

is one of the reasons. The writer suggests that, with young children the most important strategy can be by reducing the time they spend in front of the screen. Parents need to know what the children are exposed to, decode the message delivered through the advertising and make them understand what is important for them and what is harmful and what the marketers are trying to sell [14].

Advertising and children

Children come across advertising through TV, radio, billboards, magazines and newspapers - and innovative forms of advertising are developing all the time. It is important for young children to know that advertisers are trying to make you buy something. The advertisers sell them the products which might not be useful for them. Advertising affects the young children in different ways and it is important to understand the effect. The various factors can be their age, the personality and the family as well as the social background. Parents need to understand the effect and also reduce the pestering to purchase a product for them. The advertisers portray the products in order to attract this target audience to buy their products using different appeals and strategies and consider this category as one of the important group as buyers/target audience [15].

Effects of advertising on children

According to the author, along with the negative, there comes a positive effect of advertising on children and has listed some of these positive as well as negative effects from his point of view. He says that the best way in which the marketers can convince the consumers is by making them the brand loyal. Positive effects are, the children are aware about the products in the market as well as the healthy food products which they should consume. The negative effects are, the children might get the misleading messages by misinterpreting it, could be dangerous and hazardous when there are stunts displayed in the ads, increase the pester power, persuade them to buy products which they do not need and change the eating habits by heavily promoting junk food [16].

Marketing and advertising to children: the issues at stake

With the changing times, the children are seen having their personal preferences for the things they use. Hence, they are considered as the one of the major segment to target by the advertisers and the marketers. They are well aware about the different communication message that reach them and can identify the difference between the marketing and other forms of communication from an early age. These advertising and marketing tactics have a negative influence on the mental as well as the physical health on the children. Government entities have stated taking strict actions against the misleading advertising for children. In order to avoid this the author give a suggestion that it is possible to regulate this by combining the efforts government, business and other stakeholders that we can start shaping marketing and advertising practices as a positive contribution for our children today and future generations [17].

Assessment of youth responses to anti-smoking ads: Description of a research protocol

The working paper summarizes the protocol used in a study to determine the characteristics of anti-smoking ads more and less likely to be potentially effective in influencing teenage smoking. Youth Smoking and the Media (YSM), funded by the National Cancer Institute, aims to better understand the relationship between the amount and type of anti-smoking advertising exposure, newspaper coverage on tobacco

and youth smoking related attitudes and behaviour. The universe of media influences includes anti-smoking advertising on television, radio, billboards and print media; news coverage on tobacco issues; portrayal of smoking in movies, in television programs and music media; and internet-based messages about smoking. For television advertising, where highest financial investment is made, the amount and type of anti-smoking advertising is amenable to retrospective measurement, using archival data sources.

Research has begun to identify and characterize anti-smoking ads based upon the Main 'theme' of the ad. This study was roundly criticized for having poor methods and ignoring many of the other elements of advertising. This included ads that discussed the negative impact of smoking on family members, ads implying that youth who smoke have taken the wrong life path, and ads that depicted non-smoking as normative and acceptable to peers. It is clear that ads vary not only in relation to their main message, but also in the many executional elements of the ad—the visual stimuli, the actors, the kind of affect it arouses in the viewer, the lighting, voice over, music, imagery, tone, and innumerable other factors.

Ads used in an Australian anti-smoking campaign which graphically portrayed the message that every cigarette is doing damage, were perceived by 15-17 year old smokers as making them more likely to try to quit smoking and to feel more uncomfortable about smoking. Research on the relative effectiveness of anti-drug ads has also found evidence in favour of eliciting negative emotions.

Some anti-smoking advertising messages may undermine the potential benefits of other messages. Some anti-smoking advertising may be effective when first introduced, but lose salience over time or "wear out" as it fights to capture attention amidst the clutter of other ads. Total, 50 ads representing the range of advertising messages and sponsors was included for study. Every reel included ads produced by each of the four groups of organizations, youth and non-youth focused, and represented a range of 8 themes including: cessation methods or strategies, health effects of smoking, health benefits of quitting, second hand smoke, exposing tobacco industry manipulation, parental or sibling guidance about tobacco, ads portraying tobacco as uncool, and other. Teens were recruited by established market research field services. Staff first requested to speak with an adult, to whom they explained the purpose and nature of the study [18].

Effects of advertisements on children

According to the writer, the children are not matured enough to understand what the advertiser is actually trying to tell. They do not understand the marketer's strategy of selling the products.

On the other hand the writer says that the advertisements portraying the junk food are very influential towards children. They do not understand that these food products could be harmful to them and can lead to health issues like obesity or deficiency of nutrients required for the body. Because of the influence of advertising there is an increase in the consumption of the junk food in children. When there is a reduced exposure of media to children it tends to have a positive effect.

On account of advertising children have their own preferences for the clothing as accessories which might be not suitable for them and the pestering or nagging of the children to the parents make them buy the products for them. There is an increase in the demands of the products from this segment of the market and hence the marketer consider them as an integral part of the marketing strategy.

The writer has given suggestions to the parents, where it is mentioned that parents should make their children understand that the products are not necessary for them and also reduce their media exposure [19].

Marketing to children

Behaviour imitation is most probably done by children rather than adults. As children have little or no evaluative judgment, there are many reasonable concerns on advertising to children. The guidelines developed by the Children's Advertising Review Unit (CARU) of the Council of Better Business Bureau state that presentations or claims of a product must not delude children about performance of the product, spoil a child's imagination or create absurd expectations, that safe situations should be used to show products and the ads must not encourage inappropriate behavior for children. The guidelines also lead the marketers to avoid ads that motivate the children to pressurize their parents to buy the product or mislead children that ownership of the product will make peers accept them. A major issue about the effect of marketing on children's behavior is whether food marketers inspire children to overeat and therefore cause the numerous obesity and health problems among children. Over the last few years, many companies have voluntarily modified their marketing practices to avoid regulations on food advertising to children. There are many advantages to the argument that any consumption behavior is the responsibility of the adults eating the expensive food items or allowing children to eat them and the marketers are not at fault. Regarding advertising to children, there is an agreement that even if promotional messages are understood by children, marketers must take special care in advertising to them as they spend a lot of time viewing TV and online.

Research Design

Research Problem

The negative or positive effects of advertising on teenagers (13-19 age group).

Objectives

Children: To analyse the extent of awareness amongst children about the effect of advertising.

Parents: To analyse the awareness amongst parents about the effects of media/advertisements on children.

Psychologist: To discuss the perception of Psychologist about the effects of media on children.

Type of research

Qualitative and Quantitative Research Design

Type of sampling

Stratified Sampling where 'age' is taken as a parameter.

Sample population

Sample respondents selected would be from the zone—Gurgaon

Sample Size

100 respondents

- Children-75
- Parents-20

- Psychologists-5

Data Collection

The data collection tool used for the research are Interview and Schedule according to the comfort of the respondents.

Analysis and Interpretation

Attached along with are the statistical pie charts of the results of the research and the analysis of the results from the perspective of teenagers/children and well as from the perspective of parents with reference to the age group of 13–19 years.

Analysis: teenagers' perspective

The researcher believes that there has been increase in the time the children spend in front of the screen and the television advertisements are the most influential. The children have the knowledge about the increase in the dispensable income and hence the pester power has also increased. The advertising has influences in such a manner that there is a change in the eating habits where fast food is consumed more than the home cooked food. The researcher also found that the teenagers consider celebrities as their role models and some also consider their parents as one. They also wish to be like their role models.

Analysis: Parents' perspective

According to the researchers analyses parents are very keen towards making their children see what they should and reduce the screen viewing time of their children. They want to make their children what is appropriate to them. Pester power has led to the increased expenditure even when the parents are rarely getting convinced to the pestering by the children. The researcher also feels that the parents have started noticing the positive effects of advertising on children when they see their children referring to the social awareness creating advertisements during discussions with their parents which according to them is the positive effect of advertising.

Analyses: psychological perspective

In order to make this research more comprehensive the researcher collected data from various professionals from the field of psychology. Some of these were professors from the psychology department of the amity university specialising in various fields such as relationship counsellor, environmental psychology as well as counselling. Along with these the opinions of professional psychologists were also collected. Each professional was given a questionnaire asking several questions related to the impact of media and advertisements on adolescents from the age group of 13-19 yrs. These questions were a mix of objective and subjective forms.

Thus provided below is an analyses of the responses of each of these professionals:

- **Name: Ms. Simrit Sethi**

Profession: assist. Professor in Amity University

Education: M. Phil(psychology)

Specialization: environmental psychology

The Prof., when asked whether she has any students coming to her with issues stated that she did. Between the two genders she stated that it was the boys who were more comfortable with talking about the daily problems faced by them. Girls are slightly reluctant. The Prof. also attributes the main reasons for these issues to family and peers.

In her opinion an average of more than 16 hours a week is spent on television/internet by a regular teen. Internet is the most powerful tool affecting adolescents today the second being the television. She also made an interesting observation stating that given the age group that is being studied the influence of media is highly predominant and works in both positive and negative ways. Having stated the importance of media effect (both positive and negative) she observed that gender too plays an important role in the kind of influence advertisements/media has on adolescents. She painted a stark difference in the way boys and girls react to diff. messages carried out by media. While girls are faced with issues concerning social and self-image, boys usually get aggressive and competitive. The attribution of the problems faced by women is mostly internal while men attribute problems to external environment. The Prof. spoke about the narcissistic behavioural characteristics that girls develop at an early age due to the overcompensation of inferior self-image developed by the high social and physical standards set by media. There is a need to seek attention and compete amongst boys due to the improper representation of right and wrong leading to a complete breakdown in gender differentiation. She also stated that the media is an essential factor in developing stringent stereotypes leading to low tolerance and patience levels.

- **Name: Doctor Sonakshi Singh**

Profession: Assistant Professor, department of psychology, Amity University

Educational Qualifications: PHD

Specialization: relationship expert/marriage counsellor

The Prof. stated that she receives an approximate of 4-6 students per week, most commonly boys. She is the chief counsellor for the ACDC. She attributed the major reason for the common issues faced by children to relationships with their family and peers as well. She stated that adolescents are exposed to an approximate of 9-15 hours of television/internet per week, internet being the strongest of all media tools. An important observation made by Miss Sonakshi is the increasing role of empowering women in the advertisements today. She stated that due to the increase in the awareness in the Indian society about the worth of women children too particularly boys are now learning that girls can do whatever the boys can. This is in a way is reducing the vast gender gap that exists in gender roles in the society that have existed for so long. She also points out that the adolescents experience physical and mental maturity much earlier. The 19 year olds are no longer referred to as teenagers a more suitable term for this age group is young adults. The girls start their menstruation cycle by the age of 8-10 which is a radical change from the earlier age at which they usually hit puberty. This has resulted in the limiting of the term teenage to 7-14 years. The boys are in a way creating space for the girls to take the lead. Having mentioned that she states that it is important for the parents to limit the use of internet. The excessive usage of laptops and tablets will create an increasingly detrimental effect upon the health in several psycho-socioeconomic ways leading to issues such as obesity, depression and low motivation. She also stated that the way in which men and women react to similar advertisements in a very different manner. While women are influenced by emotional and positive content, men are influenced by adventure and competition.

- **Name: Aparmanika Sharma**

Profession: Assistant Professor

Qualification: PHD Psychology

Specialization: Counselling

Aparmanika Sharma is a counsellor in the psychology department of The Amity University, Noida. She too receives approximately 9-10 students in a week and in her experience both genders approach her equally. This is unlike what the other two Prof. have answered in their questionnaires. The other two professionals believe that boys are more vocal about their issues and tend to talk to their teachers more than girls do. She attributes the issues faced by her students mostly to peers. She also believes that kids tend to watch television/internet for 9-15 hours a week, which highly influences their behaviour. All forms of media highly effects the interpersonal relationships amongst adolescents. She too mentions that there is a vast difference between boys and girls in their reaction towards advertisements.

This is one observation that is unanimously believed by all the professionals no matter what their qualification is. She placed extreme importance on the role of parents and support system on the lives of the adolescents. She emphasized on the need for the parents to maintain a positive interpersonal relationship with their children. She stated that the need arises to constantly communicate with adolescents and provide them with the right mental equipment so that the decisions made by adolescents are not heavily influenced by media or commercial. She also suggested that in order to keep the influences of media at minimal the parents also need to grow with the growing age and try to constantly be in touch with their children's life.

- **Name: Namrata Thandi**

Profession: H.R. professional

Educational qualification: B.A. psychology; M.P.M

Miss Namrata receives approximately 4-6 children per week and most of them are females. In her experience most of the issues faced by the adolescents are related to the problems in their school/college. She believes that children tend to spend more than 16 hours a week in the direct contact of some sort of media. She too believes internet to be the most powerful influence upon teens today. She thinks that media is an extremely strong tool which influences a young adults everyday functioning and experiences. She believes that the negative effects of media are much more predominant than the positive effects as far as youth of ages 13-19 years is concerned.

According to Mrs. Namrata women are more easily influenced by advertisements and commercials as they are more emotional than men and hence react to ads emotionally. Men behave in a rather detached manner and respond better to advertisements having the rational and factual appeals. In her opinion, the growing young adults should not spend more than a total of 2 hours being subjected to any sort of media in a day. She also mentions the role of parental awareness and control in order to limit the effects of advertising upon children. In her opinion, the increase in awareness about the harmful effects of advertising can also limit the effects of advertising on children. She is a proponent of censorship and bands on certain channels viewed by the adolescents.

Collective analyses

There were several opinions of the psychologists questioned which were unanimous, however there were some points where the experts differed when questioned by the researcher:

For example, all the professionals agreed that there is a vast difference between the reactions of girls and boys to the effects of media. Reasons for this behaviour are that girls tend to be more emotional and attribute issues to internal environment while boys are more rational in their approach towards advertisements and attribute issues to

external environment. Another fact that was concluded through the questionnaire was that internet today is the most powerful tool that affects the adolescents. They spend roughly more than 16 hours a week expose to media. Most professionals advise the children to limit their entertainment time to 2 hours a day.

Negative effects of advertisements include several developmental both psychological and physiological. Media and commercials general a lack of moral ground creating a wide expanse of grey which helps teenagers justify wrong actions. It creates gender stereotypes and incites aggression. Effects of media also include the lack of patience and social apathy. All these factors are directly responsible for the depression and low social image which is a grave issue and is being faced by most teenagers.

The physiological effects of media are the lack of concentration, obesity and sluggishness. The teenagers also face insomnia due to not having enough physical stimulation. The time spent on screen leads to mental fatigue but not physical which today is the root cause of insomnia.

The positive effects of media according to the professionals range from creating awareness about the different gender roles, and norms of the society. For e.g. the adolescents are more aware of the need to vote, or wear seatbelts and not drink and drive. They realize the negative effects of smoking and drinking much more through these adverts. Furthermore the ads like "why should boys have all the fun" create a sense of equality which otherwise is missing in the Indian society.

While some psychologist believe that boys are more open with the problems they experience the others believe that girls are more vocal. However the subjects of these issues faced are largely similar leading from issues with peers, disruptive family environment and failure in achieving.

Conclusion

The topic of the research was the effects of advertisements upon teenagers (13-19 years). Three objectives were chosen which were

Children

To analyse the extent of awareness amongst children about the effect of advertising.

Parents

To analyse the awareness amongst parents about the effects of media/advertisements on children.

Psychologist

To discuss the perception of Psychologist about the effects of media on children.

The research was a mixture of both qualitative and quantitative designs using several methods of data collection such as interview, questionnaire and schedule. The researcher used stratified sampling with age as a parameter. The sample size of this research was 75 children all within the age group along with which 20 parents were also interviewed. To get an additional opinion, 5 professionals from the field of psychology were asked several questions about the research topic.

Recommendations

There were several recommendations that emerged through the

course of this research to limit the negative effects of advertising on the adolescents. Some of these recommendations were given by the psychologists interviewed during this research while the others came from the parents of adolescents. The authors of the research collectively analysed the results and drafted the following suggestions:

- A major emphasis is placed upon the effective communication between adolescents, their peers and family. Dr. Sonakshi Singh, a relationship expert states that if the adolescents are surrounded by quality company and meaningful conversation, they themselves would be less inclined towards entertainment mediums such as television or the internet.
- Parents and family play a key role in limiting the use of television and internet. Constant monitoring with adequate reasons would also make the teenager more sensible in his use of these mediums.
- A severe check upon the ethics and morals of the ads by the advertising companies should also help reduce these negative influences.
- Keeping a child involved in healthy, outdoor activities and constructing mental stimulation will automatically make a child more active.
- Entertainment from channels like discovery, of travel and living is not as harmful as the one from Hollywood/Hollywood movies.
- Habits like reading a novel, playing an instrument or dancing also boosts the endorphins and keeps teenagers mind active.
- The kind of programs viewed by the parents or the members or the family also need to be checked as many times the programs being watched by the mother may have content which is not suitable for the child. Since these programs play in the house the child unwillingly absorbs these messages.
- As children grow older the parents and schools should take out time to explain to them about various experiences which are new to them such as infatuation, use of hazardous substances like alcohol etc, need to compete with others for social approval.
- Families should also change with the changing world and become of acceptable of the needs of today's child.
- Warnings and age requirements for watching movies etc should be honoured religiously.

Limitations

The limitation of the study faced by the researcher was that it was conducted under a short period of time and hence lacks the detailed analyses of the results. It also was conducted during a period where the adolescents in the age group (13-19 years) had examinations and hence the questionnaires that were filled by them may not be entirely sincere. The data collection method being a questionnaire does not provide a detailed analysis of the objective, however due to lack of resources and shortage of time other methods of data collection could not be used. However the researchers worked to the maximum of their capabilities to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research topic in the above-mentioned restrictions.

Researcher's Suggestions

The researcher through the course of this study established that

media in particular advertising has an extremely lasting impact on teenagers psychosocial development. Thus, it is extremely paramount to limit the negative impacts of advertising such as violence, body image issues, insomnia and improper eating behaviour as well as modelling after celebrities. Furthermore it is equally important to increase the positive effects of advertising such as gender awareness, political knowledge etc. The researcher states that this can be established through the efforts of both the parents as well as the media/advertising companies.

There is an increasing need for the parents to be more aware of the content of advertising that their children are being exposed to. The researcher also believes that effective communication within families regarding the media is extremely essential and will go a long way in reducing the negative impact of advertising.

According to the researcher it is also the duty of the media houses and advertising agencies to create advertisements which are informative and rich in quality content. Advertising ethics and laws should be honoured and advertisements should uphold the morals of the society instead of distorting them for the purpose of commercialisation. The researcher also feels that the teenagers bear the maximum brunt of negative advertising and thus it has never been more essential to create awareness as well as limit the negative exposure of media in children between the ages of 13-19 years.

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